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ABSTRACT

Presented here are the concerns raised in a series of public forums held in seven South Carolina cities in January through March 1981. The purpose of the forums was to give citizens an opportunity to express their views on the state's efforts to strengthen the quality of education in South Carolina's schools. Participants were also given the opportunity to examine the roles they can play in helping to determine state educational policies that could benefit their schools. The forums were attended by parents, educators, staff members, board members, and administrators. Each forum is reported separately and is followed by a list of each school district problem and strength identified by forum participants. Issues identified and ideas expressed varied widely. Also included are the results of an opinionnaire identifying citizen views on methods to be used by the State Board of Education to improve communication with local citizens. Recommendations from the project director to the State Board of Education, General Assembly, and State Department of Education conclude the report. The appendix includes results of six State Department of Education "listening sessions" conducted to encourage citizens to express their ideas for improving the quality of South Carolina's schools. (Author/JM)

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SEPEP

Quality Education in

South Carolina's Public Schools:

State Roles and Citizen Control

-

A Report on Seven Public Forums

1981

SOUTHEASTERN PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

1338 MAIN ST.
SUITE 501
COLUMBIA, S.C. 29201

EA 013 938

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Preface

This report has been prepared as one of the many projects of the Southeastern Public Education Program of the American Friends Service Committee. The concerns and points of view presented in this report are those raised by citizens who attended a series of public forums focusing on the subject, "Quality Education in South Carolina's Public Schools: State Roles and Citizen Control." This report attempts to fairly represent the perspectives of citizens who participated in the forums, based on their comments and on their responses to an opinionnaire administered at the forums. Because the purpose of the forums was to stimulate discussion and to share information, this report does not comment on the accuracy of citizens' views nor does the report characterize the relative value or reasonableness of citizens' opinions. While this report provides an accurate overview of sentiments expressed at the forums, it is understood that any of the citizens mentioned in the report could better present their views in person than is possible in this report.

The project director would like to thank everyone who contributed to this project by serving as a panelist, a community resource, or as a citizen participant. Special thanks to Hayes Mizell, Director of the Southeastern Public Education Program and supervising director of the SEPEP/South Carolina Committee for the Humanities Project. Also, thanks to Dr. Lois Shell, Assistant Director of the South Carolina Committee for the Humanities, and to the Committee, for support for this project.

Lorene Bradley
Project Director
5/29/81

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INTRODUCTION

For many years the Southeastern Public Education Program (SEPEP) of the American Friends Service Committee has been working with numerous community organizations in an effort to assure equal educational opportunities for all children. As a result of this effort SEPEP took the initiative to conduct a series of public forums in selected towns and cities across the state on the topic, "Quality Education in South Carolina's Public Schools: State Roles and Citizen Control".

This project was funded in part by the South Carolina Committee for the Humanities, an agent of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The purpose of the forums was to give citizens an opportunity to express their views on the roles the state can play in strengthening the quality of education in South Carolina's public schools. Citizens were also given the opportunity to examine and discuss the roles they can play in helping to determine state educational policies which could benefit their schools.

In March, 1981, the State Board of Education along with the State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Charlie Williams, conducted six regional "Listening Sessions" across the state to encourage citizens to express their ideas and concerns for improving the quality of education in South Carolina's public schools. These ideas and concerns have been included in Appendix I of this report because the findings of the listening sessions supplement those which emerged from the Southeastern Public Education Program forums.

Taken together, these findings should enable citizens, educators, administrators and other policy-makers to obtain a much broader perspective of the ideas and concerns of different groups of citizens across the state.

The following report is based on the views expressed by the forum participants. It is hoped that the dissemination of these views, through this report, will stimulate thought and discussion among decision-makers and other persons active in school affairs.

Background Information on Forums

During the months of January, February and March of 1981 SEPEP conducted seven public forums in the following locations:

Name of City	Date	Number Attending	Educational, Social and Economic Background of Attendees
Bishopville	January 13	50	Parents, educators, staff members, local school board members and administrators
Rock Hill	January 27	28	Parents, educators, administrators, local school board members and staff members
Clemson	February 10	12	Educators and parents
Marion	February 24	13	Administrators, educators and parents
Sumter	March 10	20	Parents, educators, students, former local school board member and staff members
Charleston	March 17	17	Educators, parents and local school board members
Hartsville	March 24	13	Educators, parents and administrators
TOTAL		153	

* A forum scheduled to be held in Greenwood, South Carolina on February 17, 1981 was canceled.

The project director, Lorene Bradley, moderated each forum with the assistance of three panelists: a humanist, an education professional or school board member, and a parent or citizen active in school affairs. Below is a list of the persons who served as panelists and the capacity in which they served.

Bishopville

Dr. Alma Byrd - Humanist; Associate Professor of Languages, Benedict College, Columbia, South Carolina
Place of residence - Columbia, SC

Mr. James Blake - Professional Educator; Assistant Superintendent for Administration, Marion County School District #1
Place of residence - Marion, SC

Ms. Patricia Carter - Parent; member, West Lee Elementary School's Advisory Council, Bishopville, SC
Place of residence - Bishopville, SC

Rock Hill

Dr. William Daniel - Humanist; Chairman, Department of Religion and Philosophy, Winthrop College, Rock Hill, SC
Place of residence - Rock Hill, SC

Dr. William Dufford - Professional Educator; Classroom teacher, Eau Claire High School, Columbia, SC
Place of residence - Columbia, SC

Ms. Margaret Harper - Parent; member, Rawlinson Road Junior High School's Advisory Council, Rock Hill, SC
Place of residence - Rock Hill, SC

Clemson

Dr. Mark Steadman - Humanist; Professor of English, Clemson University, Clemson, SC
Place of residence - Clemson, SC

Dr. Beatrice Thompson - Professional Educator; member, South Carolina Basic Skills Advisory Commission
Place of residence - Anderson, SC

Ms. Linda Gahan - Parent; Education Chairperson, League of Women Voters of Clemson
Place of residence - Clemson, SC

Marion

Dr. Charles Joyner - Humanist; Professor of History, USC - Coastal Carolina College, Conway, SC
Place of residence - Conway, SC

Ms. Anne Collins - Professional Educator; Vice-Chairman, State Board of Education
Place of residence - Conway, SC

Rev. Franklin Reeves - Local citizen; President, American Civil Liberties Union of SC
Place of residence - Mullins, SC

Sumter

Dr. Selden Smith - Humanist; Professor of History, Columbia College, Columbia, SC
Place of residence - Columbia, SC

Mr. Dill Gamble - Professional Educator; Associate Superintendent for Program Improvement, State Department of Education
Place of residence - Sumter, SC

Ms. Margie Williams - Parent; member, PTA, Oakland Elementary School, Sumter SC
Place of residence - Shaw Air Force Base, SC

Ms. Sylvia Loney - Local citizen; well known community leader of Sumter County
Place of residence - Dazell, SC

Charleston

Dr. Frank van Aalst - Humanist; Dean of Career Development, College of Charleston
Place of residence - Charleston, SC

Ms. Beverly Gadson - Professional Educator; Board of Directors, Citizens' Coalition for South Carolina's Public Schools
Place of residence - Charleston, SC

Ms. Linda Miller - Parent; Legislative Chairperson, PTA, Memminger Elementary School, Charleston, SC
Place of residence - Charleston, SC

Hartsville

Dr. Flora Hopkins - Humanist; member, Darlington County School Board of Education
Place of residence - Hartsville, SC

Mr. T. C. Kistler - Professional Educator; member, State Board of Education
Place of residence - Darlington, SC

Mr. Freddie Williams - Local citizen; Assistant Director, Florence County Community Action Agency
Place of residence - Darlington, SC

Greenwood

Dr. Margaret Marks - Humanist; Associate Professor of English, Lander College, Greenwood, SC
Place of residence - Greenwood, SC

Ms. Joyce Wimmer - Professional Educator; member, State Board of Education
Place of residence - Greenwood, SC

Ms. Audrey Goodwin - Local citizen; School Board Trustee, Greenwood School District #50
Place of residence - Greenwood, SC

Bishopville

On January 13, 1981 the Lee County Courthouse was half filled with many concerned citizens. These people were prepared to express their views on what they considered to be an outstanding educational issue in Lee County.

The citizens of Lee County who attended the forum believed that the major issue in their school district for the past few years has been the lack of adequate facilities. According to the "Annual Report on Accreditation of School Districts in South Carolina", the school year 1980-81 was the fifth time Bishopville High School failed to meet the minimum accreditation standards and the fourth year Ashwood-Central High School failed to meet the standards. Both of these schools have been placed on probation by the state. The local board of education will have to come up with a plan to correct the deficiency by the fall of the 1981-82 school year. If the district fails to come up with a plan which is acceptable to the state, the district will be "dropped" from an accredited status and according to the Education Finance Act of 1977 it will not receive any state funds until an acceptable plan to correct the deficiency is approved by the State Board of Education.

In the forum discussion local citizens said they would like to have a new high school. In the past as a result of citizens' request to build a new school, the local board of education took a vote to determine whether they would ask County Council to conduct a bond referendum to be voted on in the November 1980 election. The majority of the board members voted against submitting the proposal to County Council.

The citizens attending the forum expressed dissatisfaction with the way the board had been handling the situation with the school facilities in the county. Other citizens who expressed dissatisfaction were members of People for Progress of Lee County. This dissatisfaction was made public in a letter to the editor of the Lee County Messenger on August 13, 1980. (see Appendix II). These citizens felt they were not given the opportunity to decide whether they wanted to build a new school.

Some of the citizens said they were aware the local board of education was responsible for providing school buildings, but they would appreciate any services the State Department of Education could render to help resolve the deficiency and prevent the district's state funds from being terminated.

One citizen in the audience believed some board members were not interested in building a new school because their children were enrolled in private schools. It was this citizen's opinion that board members whose children were enrolled in private schools would not be interested in raising taxes to support the public schools in the county.

According to Mr. Phillip Mixon, the schools in Lee County were faced with a desegregation problem because they were predominantly black. He, along with other citizens, thought the state could prevent citizens from sending their children to private schools to make the school population equal in black and white attendance. According to one of the panelists, the state cannot prevent anyone from sending their children to private schools.

Other citizens attending the forum raised personal concerns. Mr. Richard Davis showed an interest in children with handicapping conditions and was prompted to ask the question, "Are special provisions being made to educate school age handicapped persons not able to attend school?" Another personal concern was addressed by Ms. McPhine Brooks when she asked the question, "Who determines full-day or half-day kindergarten?"

These questions along with numerous others were answered by the persons who served as panelists for the Bishopville forum.

Finally, in response to a questionnaire administered at the forum, the majority of the citizens revealed they lacked necessary information concerning roles played by the State Superintendent of Education and the State Board of Education in developing policies for the state's public school system.

Included in the SEPEP opinionnaire, citizens were given the opportunity to state what they felt were the major issues (problems) and strengths of South Carolina's public schools. Following is a list of each strength and issue identified by forum participants in Bishopville. A list of issues and strengths will follow the report on each forum discussion.

Issues/Problems	Strengths
Lack of adequate facilities (8)	Citizen participation in education (5)
Lack of instructional materials (3)	Dedicated teachers (4)
National Teacher Examination (2)	The Education Finance Act (3)
Lack of funds for poor school districts (2)	None (3)
Parents serving on local board of education whose children are enrolled in private school	Students (2)
Apathy of the general public	Providing for individual needs (2)
Public lack knowledge about public school	Quality education for all students (2)
Lack of parental involvement	The state has been instrumental in helping to advocate people who cannot afford to attend private schools regardless of the conditions of its materials and instructors
The state doesn't support its standards	Dedicated administrators
Local school districts are not complying with the law	Kindergarten
Teaching people to function in the society in which they live	
The quality of each child	
Reading (the children in Bishopville are still very poor readers and many are unable to express themselves verbally)	

Issues/Problems (cont.)

Testing

Desegregation

Pupil-teacher ratio

*The number in parenthesis indicates the number of times each concern was mentioned in each forum.

Rock Hill

During the month of January when SEPEP conducted a public forum in Rock Hill, many citizens of York County School District #3 who attended the forum were concerned about the way in which the administration had been operating the schools. Some of the citizens of the district felt the major problem between the administration and the district board of trustees was deciding "who was going to run the schools", the superintendent or the board. Some citizens called it confusion of authority while others said the superintendent was not willing to compromise with the board and allow the board to carry out its role as a policy-making body. Instead of compromising, citizens said the superintendent wanted to play an authoritarian role.

Last year, York County School District #3 elected three new members to serve on the district board of trustees. In an exchange of ideas between newly elected school district trustee Don Harper and the audience, Mr. Harper informed members of the audience of the efforts being made by the board to strengthen itself in many areas, especially that of policy-maker and allowing citizens to have input into educational policies at the local level.

As an interested and concerned board member, Mr. Harper told how he has looked for ways in which the local board of trustees can be strengthened. Mr. Harper said that until he read a handout which was provided by SEPEP's forum moderator, he was unaware the State Department of Education has the resources available to train local school board members on specific issues if assistance is requested by the local board.

Local citizens of York County School District #3 felt previous boards should have taken advantage of this opportunity to improve the skills of board members, but, as one citizen pointed out, the board could not take advantage of these resources if it was not aware of the services available from the State Department of Education.

One citizen said previous local boards would not ask the state for assistance because they didn't want the state involved in local affairs. In response to this comment, one of the panelists informed citizens that services provided by the state would probably not have been beneficial if the local board did not want it.

Ms. Margaret Harper, panelist, said, "The State Department of Education should become involved in the educational process at the local level and should not have to be asked to come into local school districts. They should 'volunteer'."

In Ms. Harper's concluding statements she made several suggestions (see Appendix III) as to ways in which citizens can band together to become involved in the educational process to assist with the development of state educational policies.

During the audience discussion one member was very concerned about the effectiveness of advisory councils and asked one of the panelists, "How do you determine how successful advisory councils are? Has anyone conducted a study to determine how successful they have been?" There wasn't anyone available to answer the question, however, Dr. William Dufford, panelist, responded by saying, the advisory council is a new and growing concept to parents as well as administrators. "Advisory councils are only as effective as the school board and superintendent allow them to be."

In conclusion, Dr. Dufford said, "Citizens and parents need to play an active role in determining the state's educational policies". (see Appendix III). He believes citizens should serve on advisory councils, establish effective lobbying groups and continue to monitor the educational process. Another perspective was offered by Dr. William Daniels, panelist, who said, "The State Department of Education is responsible for the 'broad picture of education' and local school districts are responsible for the details. Local school districts must be held accountable."

Major Issues, Problems, and Strengths
of South Carolina's Public Schools as Identified
by Persons Attending the Rock Hill Forum

Issues/Problems	Strengths
Lack of concerned parents and teachers (3)	Dedicated teachers (8)
Lack of discipline (3)	Citizen participation in education (3)
Lack of concern for students as human beings (2)	Education Finance Act
Forcing the utilization of uncertified teachers for race purposes	Governor Riley
Lack of teachers for slow learners or handicapps	Advisory councils
Lack of consideration for slow learners	The success of the basic skills
There is a need to develop a system where each student progresses in each area at his/her own pace	Its curriculum and its facilities
Learning basic skills to be able to sustain oneself in our society	
Quality of instruction	
Equal educational opportunities in each district in the state	
Agreeing to have quality education	
Lack of communication between state and local officials	
Incompetent management of the state's resources	
Busing	

Clemson

According to panelist Linda Gahan of Clemson, financing education at the local level has been one of the problems the citizens of Clemson have had to deal with in the past. She said standards developed by the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education are necessary and are making a great deal of improvement in the quality of education in the state but they also "place a financial burden on local boards trustees to find funding."

Other citizens of the county said discrimination has caused many and various problems for citizens of the county, especially females who have been prohibited from attending the same physical education classes as males.

As a result of these issues which were identified by persons attending the forum, Dr. Beatrice Thompson, panelist, said citizens can work to improve the situation as it exists. Citizens should want to help shape the development of state educational policies because policies affect their children and because parents want to see that their children are receiving the best education possible.

Dr. Thompson felt the state has been encouraging citizen involvement in developing educational policies by establishing rules and regulations for mandated school advisory councils to assist with the preparation of the annual school report. One method groups of citizens have to influence state education policies, according to Dr. Thompson, is through the development of effective lobbying groups. As lobbyists, citizens can address their concerns to members of the General Assembly, the State Superintendent of Education and the State Board of Education.

According to Ms. Linda Gahan, each county (as part of a state judicial circuit) has a representative on the State Board of Education. Citizens may address local concerns to the representative from their area instead of addressing concerns to the entire State Board of Education. In response to these statements by Ms. Gahan, some citizens said they had no idea who represents citizens of Clemson on the State Board of Education. These citizens felt the person representing them on the board should be known to the citizens he/she represent.

A concern which generated from the above discussion was the selection process for State Board of Education members. This led one citizen in the audience to ask Dr. Thompson, "How are State Board of Education members selected?" After receiving information on the selection process for board members one citizen said members of the General Assembly responsible for selecting State Board of Education members should be more selective in appointing members to serve on the State Board of Education.

They should appoint persons who are interested in the concerns of lay people or appoint more lay persons to serve on the board instead of frequently selecting education professionals who appear to be primarily concerned with the interests of their professional group.

In conclusion, Ms. Gahan encouraged citizens to become involved in the educational process and become familiar with the ways in which members of the State Board of Education can help local citizens in solving local concerns. Citizens also need to know the ways in which the State Department of Education can help local schools in improving the quality of education in their district. Ms. Gahan warned citizens that they will have to ask for help because the state will not voluntarily come into local school districts.

Major Issues, Problems, and Strengths
of South Carolina's Public Schools as Identified
by Persons Attending the Clemson Forum

Issues/Problems	Strengths
Lack of funding (2)	Dedicated teachers (4)
The General Assembly seems to make laws with no funds available to administer them	None (2)
	Its children
General Assembly not responsive to educational needs	
The state attempts to restrict the number of teachers by legislation	
Reluctance to raise taxes	

Marion

Among an audience of 13 people who attended the forum, there were four local citizens in attendance. Other members of the audience consisted of educators and administrators. During the time allowed for audience comments, one administrator asked, "Where are the parents?" In response to this question one parent in attendance said parents have been shut out of the educational system for so long they have lost confidence in public education. One citizen felt state and local officials need to encourage parent involvement in the educational process to put the public back intopublic education. Rev. Franklin Reeves, panelist, said citizens need to have input into educational policies at the state and local levels.

According to Rev. Reeves, there is a lack of communication between the State Board of Education and local boards of education. He felt there should be a working relationship between these two groups. Ms. Anne Collins, panelist, said "There has to be a fine balance between the State Board of Education and local boards of education." The State Board of Education and local boards of education should be listeners, said Ms. Collins.

During the panelists' presentations, Ms. Anne Collins informed citizens of the ways in which members of the State Board of Education can help local school districts. Citizens do not have to go directly to the State Board of Education to address specific concerns. The person on the State Board of Education representing their judicial circuit should be willing to take concerns to the State Board of Education. In the past citizens have had to push legislative delegates to get changes in their district, said Ms. Collins.

Rev. Reeves said consolidating the four school districts of Marion County has been an issue citizens of Marion County have overlooked for the past two years but this issue needs to be discussed. Some administrators felt the major issue is improving the quality of education in the county, not consolidating the school districts.

Another area in which members of the audience were interested was the Basic Skills Assessment Program of 1978. Those in attendance felt there should be several methods available to help students feel comfortable when the test is being administered. Ms. Geneva McNeil, member of the Southside Elementary School advisory council, said some students are intimidated by tests and are not aware of the real purposes of the Basic Skills Assessment Program. Administrators, teachers and principals need to explain to students that the test does not determine whether a student will pass or fail. Prior to making students aware of the purposes of the test, appropriate officials need to explain the implementation process of the Basic Skills Assessment Program and other major state laws and regulations to parents who are not familiar with them. Parents too will be able to assist in preparing students to take the test. If this can be done, citizens felt it would ease the every day pressures associated with examinations students will have to take.
In response to the above comments Mr. James Blake, Assistant Superintendent for Administration of Marion School District #1, said the district plans to develop methods which will prepare students for the administration of the Basic Skills Assessment Program this year.

Major Issues, Problems, and Strengths
of South Carolina's Public Schools as Identified
by Persons Attending the Marion Forum

Issues/Problems	Strengths
Lack of parental involvement (3)	Dedicated teachers (3)
Lack of communication between home and school (2)	Affording an education to all persons and developing the challenge needed to succeed (3)
Too much paperwork (2)	The Education Finance Act
The perceived competence of public school graduates	Teaching the basic skills
Lack of student interest	Parents
Apathy of the general public	
Lack of funding	
Testing	

Sumter

According to the views of the citizens of Sumter County School District #2 who attended the forum, the schools in this district have been experiencing problems similar to those expressed by the citizens of York County School District #3. The citizens of Sumter County School District #2 believed there was a lack of communication between the administration and local citizens. Some citizens felt the administration had been violating the Freedom of Information Act while others believed the administration had been playing the role of a "dictator". Other citizens felt the administration had not given them the opportunity to play an active role in helping to determine educational policies at the local level.

Ms. Sylvia Loney and Ms. Margie Williams, panelists, were very much concerned with how the State Department of Education can help local school districts. They identified ways citizens felt they would like the state to assist them in improving the quality of education in their districts. They are as follows:

(1) Assist with the recruitment of certified teachers;

(2) Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of the district;

(3) Inform local school districts of the materials available at the State Department of Education on discipline;

(4) Help improve the skills of the local school board;

(5) Encourage local school districts to utilize the resources provided by the State Department of Education;

(6) Increase taxes to improve the instructional program, increase teacher salaries, etc.

Some of the citizens who attended the forum were not aware that the State Department of Education is not responsible for addressing all these concerns because some of them are concerns which must be dealt with at the local level. However, these citizens were aware the department will assist local school districts at the request of the local board of education. Some of these citizens expressed a lack of clarity concerning the roles of state and local officials in eliminating local school district problems.

One citizen was interested in whether local citizens can appeal to the State Board of Education about the effectiveness of the local board of education. One of the panelists suggested that local citizens could do this but should keep in mind the powers given the local board of education by the General Assembly.

Mr. Dill Gamble, panelist, encouraged parents to become involved in the educational process and make their input felt. Mr. Gamble said it is important for citizens to assist with the development of state educational policies (see Appendix IV) because citizens are taxpayers and the educational system is a service to citizens.

Dr. Selden Smith, panelist, believed if the local board of education wants assistance from the state they can pull the "trigger". They can obtain state assistance at any time. All the local board of education has to do is request state aid.

Major Issues, Problems, and Strengths
of South Carolina's Public Schools as Identified
by Persons Attending the Sumter Forum

Issues/Problems	Strengths
Principals receiving salaries according to the highest paid teacher	American Friends Service Committee making citizens aware of their role in the educational process
Lack of funding for school districts	Those counties that have elected local boards of education are good; those that do not are controlled and no one questions that control
Lack of facilities	
District board of education is unaware of its role	
School districts employing uncertified teachers and the State Board of Education's inability to intervene	

Charleston

The Charleston County Constituent School District has been faced with a desegregation suit which was filed against them by the United States Department of Justice. According to some citizens this has been the major issue of concern to them. Some citizens said they are not sure what they can do to help alleviate this problem. According to Dr. Frank van Aalst, panelist, "Charleston County has allowed itself to live with a system in which there is confusion of authority between constituent body and consolidated board." Ms. Linda Miller, panelist, said she lacked necessary knowledge as to what can be done to alleviate the problem. As a general comment she said the only role the state would have played in helping Charleston County alleviate this problem would have been to monitor the desegregation problem if the local board had requested state assistance.

During the forum discussion panelist Ms. Beverly Gadson and Dr. Frank von Aalst identified what they and other citizens perceived to be additional issues facing Charleston County. Ms. Gadson said, "The 1980's is faced with many complex issues." They are as follows: National Teacher Examination requirements, whether to abolish the constituent school districts of Charleston County, decline in student enrollment, withdrawal of funds, and an increase in the number of discipline problems. Ms. Gadson felt that no one person or groupsof persons have the answers as to how these problems can be eliminated. However, she said, "the ultimate decision restswith citizens." Citizens can decide how involved they want to be. Dr. van Aalst said he believed the general populus of Charleston County would consider the following issues to be as important as desegregation. These issues include: quality of teachers,

inequality of resources and the problem of parents not being heard by policy-makers, school officials and teachers. However, he felt the state has enacted legislation to address all of these concerns.

Ms. Linda Miller felt that so much authority has been taken away from the local level that citizens have said they don't know what the people at the state level are doing. According to citizens, members of the State Board of Education do not have the time to develop policies because most of them have outside obligations. Citizens said board members go to Columbia for board meetings once a month and they only receive travel and per diem for their services. They said, "That is why they 'rubber stamp' everything (often automatically approve recommended policies)." To add to this comment one citizen felt lay representation is poor on the State Board of Education. Many persons felt the person appointed to serve on the State Board of Education from their judicial circuit has shown a lack of interest in their concerns. Citizens felt the representative should be available to talk with them about local issues and concerns. Most of the citizens attending the forum expressed the need to know the person to whom they can take their concerns.

Many citizens showed an interest in the Basic Skills Assessment Program and the Education Finance Act of 1977. They believed these are two ways in which the state has enabled and encouraged local citizens to help with the development of state educational policies, but some said they are not familiar with the implementation process of these new laws.

Major Issues, Problems, and Strengths
of South Carolina's Public Schools as Identified
by Persons Attending the Charleston Forum

Issues/Problems	Strengths
Desegregation (2)	Students, teachers and administrators (3)
Lack of funding (2)	Concerned parents, PTA's, civic and other groups as well as those administrators, educators and elected officials who care about the strengths of our young minds (2)
Providing equal educational opportunities	
Quality education	
The public schools need a better standard of operation	The Education Finance Act
	The Defined Minimum Program
The allocation of teachers based on a formula	The entire operation of the public schools has increased in the past few years
There is a need for better administrators	
Lack of teaching skills	

Hartsville

The citizens of Darlington County have identified their major issue in several different ways. Some call it a "dual school system" while others say its "geographic zoning", but among the black population they call it"desegregation". Darlington County has schools identified as black and white. During the forum discussion Mr. Freddie Williams, panelist, said the state needs to encourage the local board of education in Darlington County to eliminate the dual school system and to make the schools integrated.

Mr. T. C. Kistler, panelist, told members of the audience that there are many opportunities for citizens to have input into state and local educational policies. "Opportunities exist from top to bottom. Citizens have far more power than they ever dreamed." Mr. Kistler also informed citizens that since Darlington County moved to elected school board members citizens were strengthened by being given the power of elected representation.

A member of the school advisory council said the local board of education in Darlington County usually avoids publicizing the date and location of upcoming board meetings to prevent interested citizens from attending. She felt the state should encourage local boards to publicize board meetings to give citizens an opportunity to have input and to express their concerns.

While many citizens have the communication skills necessary to advocate for their own interests, Mr. Franklin Hines, local citizen, expressed deep concern for parents and other citizens who have specific concerns but are unable to articulate what they want. In response to Mr. Hines comment, Mr. Kistler told those in attendance that such persons can obtain assistance from parent advisory councils, the Darlington County Task Force and the local board of education. (see Appendix V).

Some citizens felt the Darlington County Board of Education usually hires whites to fill most administrative positions instead of giving qualified minorities an opportunity. According to Mr. Freddie Williams blacks in the county have not been given the opportunity to go beyond a principalship. Mr. Franklin Hines shared this opinion that there is a lack of opportunities for blacks in the school system of Darlington County.

One topic which generated much discussion from the audience was addressed by Ms. Annie Peterson, Principal, Washington Street Elementary School. Ms. Peterson said, "Who is to decide which programs are needed? Shouldn't the local board of education decide whether or not to have a particular program? Do we have to have the same programs at all schools?" Ms. Peterson felt a full-day kindergarten is needed at Washington Street Elementary School to meet the special needs of the children. The school, in the past, has had a full-day kindergarten program. Mr. Kistler told the audience some parents said full-day kindergarten was too long for kindergarten age children; children need to adjust to school. Ms. Peterson felt the local board of education has been unfair to the children of Washington Street because parents in other areas of the county felt full-day kindergarten was too long for their children. In response to this concern, some citizens felt the state could help local boards of education to include full-day kindergarten in schools to meet the special needs of the children.

According to Mr. Williams, citizens have identified other deficiencies in the school system of Darlington County. (see appendix V). These deficiencies include: lack of discipline in the schools, the decline in the number of certified teachers due to teacher certification requirements, and the policies of testing and evaluation in the schools.

Major Issues, Problems, and Strengths
of South Carolina's Public Schools as Identified
by Persons Attending the Hartsville Forum

Issues/Problems	Strengths
Attitudes of parents toward public education (2)	Dedicated professional staff (2)
Lack of parent and student interest in better quality education	Improvement in communication
Attitudes of students towards learning	Working toward improving the quality of education in the state
Lack of discipline	
Continued dualism	
Schools need pairing not zoning	
Lack of funds at the local level	
Reading, writing and arithmetic	

Results of Opinionnaire

At forums throughout the state the Southeastern Public Education Program administered an opinionnaire (see Appendix VI) to assess citizens' points of view about the roles the state is now playing and can play to improve the quality of education in South Carolina's public schools. The results of the opinionnaire indicated that 55% of the respondents felt the standards developed by the state are making little improvement in the quality of education in South Carolina's public schools at the local level; 39% felt the standards are making a great deal of improvement and 6% felt the standards are contributing to a decline in the quality of education in South Carolina.

Fifty percent of the respondents felt the standards are necessary for all school districts; 23% felt they are necessary for some districts; 10% felt they are necessary, but rules and regulations are too strict, and 17% felt the standards place too much burden on school administrators (superintendents, principals, etc.).

Seven percent of those persons attending the forums felt the State Board of Education is using its authority to provide good public schools in South Carolina; 29% felt the board is not using its authority to provide good public schools; 44% felt the board is doing the best it can considering its authority and the resources (money) provided by the General Assembly and 20% felt the board is limited by its size and methods of operation (i.e., the board often automatically approves recommended policies).

The results of the data collected point out that citizens believe the standards developed by the state are necessary but are making little improvement in the quality of education in South Carolina's public schools, and the State Board of Education is doing the best it can considering its authority and the resources provided by the General Assembly.

Since there has been a perceived lack of communication between the State Board of Education and local citizens, citizens felt the State Board of

Education could take some corrective action to improve its relationship with them and to enhance the public's understanding of how the state school system is governed. The SEPEP opinionnaire asked citizens to express their views on six methods which could be used by the State Board of Education to improve its communication with local citizens. The citizens indicated they believed Board-citizen communication could be improved by:

35% Requiring each member of the State Board of Education to visit schools and talk with parents, students and administrators in each school district included in the judicial circuit he/she represents;

21% Holding public meetings throughout the state;

14% Establishing a citizen advisory council to the State Board of Education;

12% Establishing a "hot line" to facilitate communication with local citizens;

10% Inviting representatives of local school advisory councils to attend State Board of Education meetings;

8% Conducting a statewide survey of citizens attitudes toward public education in South Carolina every three years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to obtain maximum benefits from this report, the project director felt it was necessary to develop a few recommendations based on the concerns and ideas expressed by forum participants. The purpose of these recommendations is: (1) to share with members of the General Assembly, the State Board of Education, and the State Department of Education the project director's perceptions of concerns expressed by persons attending the forums; and (2) to encourage state officials to work towards a more sustained effort to increase citizen participation in the development of state education policies.

The effort put forth by the State Board of Education and the State Superintendent of Education to conduct "Listening Sessions" to elicit citizen input for improving public education in South Carolina is commendable. While the listening sessions resulted in increased citizen input, citizen participation could be even more extensive and representative if the sessions were scheduled at a time which does not limit the number of citizens able to attend. Many of the attendees at SEPEP's forums raised the concern that listening sessions were held during the average person's workday thereby preventing them from attending and voicing their opinions. The vast

majority of the state's citizens are employed during the hours of nine-to-five. The State Board of Education and the State Superintendent of Education could get more representative feedback from the people they serve if they would schedule sessions not only at times which do not conflict with the workday but also in alternate locations throughout rural and urban areas of the state.

The SEPEP forums revealed that many citizens have an interest in the operation of the State Board of Education. Some citizens were concerned about the selection process for State Board of Education members while others were concerned about the socio-economic backgrounds of persons serving on the board. There is no doubt the State Board of Education is composed primarily of education professionals. Some citizens felt that legislative delegates responsible for selecting board members have been unfair to lay citizens in that they are not adequately represented on the State Board of Education. Since the state encourages citizen participation in education, it would be worth the effort of legislative delegations to appoint more lay citizens to serve on the State Board of Education as a way to diversify the perspectives and interests represented on the board and to draw upon the experiences of informed and active lay persons.

Not only did citizens feel they were not adequately represented on the State Board of Education, but some citizens acknowledged they were not aware of the person serving on the board representing their judicial circuit. Therefore, citizens felt there is a lack of communication between them and the State Board of Education. Many members of the State Board of Education have said they are interested in the concerns of local citizens. If board members are interested in citizens' concerns they could develop several methods

to improve communication between themselves and local citizens. One useful method would be for each board member to conduct public meetings, or mini-"listening sessions", in the counties represented in their judicial circuit. One of the many advantages to conducting public meetings would be to provide a forum for explaining to local citizens the implementation process of the Basic Skills Assessment Act and the Education Finance Act. Many citizens said they were not familiar with how these laws are carried out. Along with becoming familiar with the implementation process of these laws citizens will become familiar with the roles played by the State Board of Education and the State Superintendent of Education in regards to these laws. State Board of Education members will also have an opportunity to listen to concerns addressed by citizens in the judicial circuit they represent and to make personal contact with local citizens. Board members will also have an opportunity to inform local citizens of the ways the State Department of Education can assist local citizens in solving local school district problems.

APPENDICES

Appendix I

Charleston	Florence	Chester	Columbia	Greenville	MAJOR RECURRING CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY ONE OR MORE GROUPS DURING THE REGIONAL "LISTENING SESSIONS" (Figures indicate the number of times a concern was expressed at each regional meeting)
7	16	7	9	8	Defined Minimum Program Standards and Accreditation Procedures (47)
3	4	14	8	6	What Can Be Done About Federal Budget Cuts? (35)
4	2	3	8	15	Administration of Basic Skills Assessment Program and Interpretation of Test Scores (32)
7	1	7	6	10	Reduce Pupil-Teacher Ratios or Class Sizes (31)
2	8	11	3	0	More Emphasis on Basic Skills (24)
4	2	4	8	4	Improve School-Community Relations (22)
2	8	2	4	5	Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Accountability (21)
2	3	10	4	2	Expand Gifted and Talanted Programs (possibly as Education Finance "Weighting") (21)
0	7	3	4	6	Reduce Paperwork (20)
7	0	5	2	2	Certification Procedures for Teachers and Administrators (16)
5	3	0	1	6	Middle School Certification Requirements (15)
3	4	6	0	1	Lack of Discipline or Drug Problems (14)
1	0	10	2	1	School Bus Safety (14)

Appendix I

Charleston	Florence	Chester	Columbia	Greenville	MAJOR RECURRING CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY ONE OR MORE GROUPS DURING THE REGIONAL "LISTENING SESSIONS" (Figures indicate the number of times a concern was expressed at each regional meeting)
1	4	1	2	5	Use of School Advisory Councils or School Advisory Council Reports (13)
3	1	5	0	3	Adequate Funds to Operate School Buses (12)
1	2	3	2	4	More Building Funds (12)
2	2	2	1	0	Help in "Mainstreaming" Handicapped Pupils (7)
0	1	1	3	2	Overloaded Guidance Counselors; Need for Better Guidance Services (7)
0	1	2	0	4	Improve Teachers' Working Conditions (7)
0	2	0	2	1	Re-evaluate Education Finance Act "Weightings" (5)
1	0	2	2	0	Education for "Profoundly Handicapped" Students (5)
1	3	0	0	0	More Emphasis on Vocational Education (4)
2	1	1	0	0	The Question of An "Exit" Examination in Graduation Requirements (4)
0	0	1	0	3	Improve Teachers' Salaries (4)
1	1	0	1	1	Pupil Achievement in S.C. Compared to National Norms (4)
0	0	1	1	2	Full-Day Kindergartens (4)

Appendix I

Charleston	Florence	Chester	Columbia	Greenville	MAJOR RECURRING CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY ONE OR MORE GROUPS DURING THE REGIONAL "LISTENING SESSIONS" (Figures indicate the number of times a concern was expressed at each regional meeting)
0	1	1	1	0	Too Much Time Spent on Testing Programs (3)
0	0	2	1	0	Tax Credit for Private Schools (3)
0	0	1	1	0	Full Funding for Education Finance Act (2)
0	1	1	0	0	Need for Parent Education Programs (2)

Appendix I

PTA & Advisory Council Representatives	Community Leaders	Principals & Voc. Center Directors	Teachers	Superintendents & Board Members	MAJOR RECURRING CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY GROUPS DURING THE REGIONAL "LISTENING SESSIONS" (Figures indicate the number of times a concern was expressed by members of each group)
5	2	13	9	18	Defined Minimum Program Standards and Accreditation Procedures (47)
10	8	1	5	11	What Can Be Done About Federal Budget Cuts? (35)
7	0	11	13	1	Administration of Basic Skills Assessment Program and Interpretation of Test Scores (32)
7	0	3	18	3	Reduce Pupil-Teacher Ratios or Class Sizes (31)
12	3	0	9	0	More Emphasis on Basic Skills (24)
13	5	0	4	0	Improve School-Community Relations (22)
5	12	1	3	0	Teacher Evaluation and Teacher Accountability (21)
8	7	0	2	4	Expand Gifted and Talanted Programs (possibly as Education Finance "Weighting") (21)
0	2	5	10	3	Reduce Paperwork (20)
0	1	8	5	2	Certification Procedures for Teachers and Administrators (16)
0	0	8	2	5	Middle School Certification Requirements (15)
4	10	0	0	0	Lack of Discipline or Drug Problems (14)
11	1	0	1	1	School Bus Safety (14)

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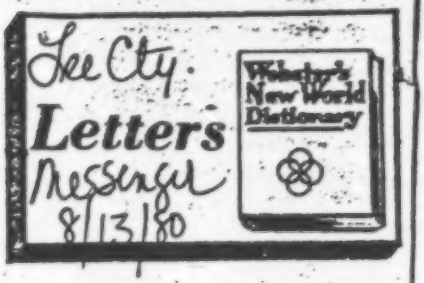
PTA & Advisory Council Representatives	Community Leaders	Principals & Voc. Center Directors	Teachers	Superintendents & Board Members	MAJOR RECURRING CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY GROUPS DURING THE REGIONAL "LISTENING SESSIONS" (Figures indicate the number of times a concern was expressed by members of each group)
8	0	4	0	1	Use of School Advisory Councils or School Advisory Council Reports (13)
4	6	1	1	0	Adequate Funds to Operate School Buses (12)
3	3	0	1	5	More Building Funds (12)
1	0	2	4	0	Help in "Mainstreaming" Handicapped Pupils (7)
3	3	0	1	0	Overloaded Guidance Counselors; Need for Better Guidance Services (7)
0	1	2	4	0	Improve Teachers' Working Conditions (7)
1	0	2	2	0	Re-evaluate Education Finance Act "Weightings" (5)
1	1	2	0	1	Education for "Profoundly Handicapped" Students (5)
1	0	3	0	0	More Emphasis on Vocational Education (4)
1	1	0	1	1	The Question of An "Exit" Examination in Graduation Requirements (4)
1	1	0	2	0	Improve Teachers' Salaries (4)
2	2	0	0	0	Pupil Achievement in S. C. Compared to National Norms (4)
0	1	2	0	1	Full-Day Kindergartens (4)

Appendix I

PTA & Advisory Council Representatives	Community Leaders	Principals & Voc. Center Directors	Teachers	Superintendents & Board Members	MAJOR RECURRING CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY GROUPS DURING THE REGIONAL "LISTENING SESSIONS" (Figures indicate the number of times a concern was expressed by members of each group)
0	1	0	1	1	Too Much Time Spent on Testing Programs (3)
2	0	0	0	1	Tax Credits for Private Schools (3)
0	0	1	0	1	Full Funding for Education Finance Act (2)
2	0	0	0	0	Need for Parent Education Programs (2)

School board's decision seen as problem



Dear Editor:

A few weeks ago, the Lee County School Board decided to deny the citizens of Lee County the opportunity to choose whether they want to appropriate tax dollars to construct a new high school.

This choice was to be made by the citizens in a Referendum in the General Election on November 4, 1980.

There are many questions still unanswered with respect to the school board's recent decision.

The first: why was this decision made after the primary election? The board members that voted for this evidently felt that this decision would have been unpopular with a great many of the citizens, therefore they chose to wait until after the primary.

Considering their recent action and their timing, leads one to believe that even though they were elected by the people, they, the majority of the present school board, do not have the best interest of the county's public school system at heart.

Another question that should come to mind is the legality of their decision. The School Board does not have the authority to appropriate taxes for the School System, therefore they are not authorized to decide what choices are presented to the voters with respect to how their tax dollars should be spent.

As citizens concerned about the future welfare of our school children, we are still faced with an ever pressing problem. What lies in the future of our county's Public School System? It is known that our present Public School System lies very close to the bottom in State and the National ranking.

We now stand to lose accredidation at Ashwood and Bishopville High Schools.

We are already behind when it comes to positive action. And now we are facing still another setback. The problem that we are facing cannot go ignored.

As we have seen from past experience, ignoring a bad situation only makes a worse situation.

It is time that we as citizens, whites and blacks alike, let our elected officials know that we are aware of what is happening and that we are definitely not pleased.

Lee County People for Progress

Play active role in schools, parents told

By BARBARA BARKLEY
Evening Herald staff writer

ROCK HILL — Parents and educators got a look at the state's education hierarchy Tuesday and were told it's important for them to play an active role in the state's educational process.

About 25 people attended a forum at Joynes Center sponsored by the Southeastern Public Education Program of the American Friends Service Committee.

"Citizens and parents need to play an active role in determining the state's educational policy," Dr. William Dufford told the group. Dufford, an Eau Clair classroom teacher, is a former York school district superintendent.

Since 1963, he said, the State Department of Education has taken more and more control away from local school boards by controlling money given to districts. The state controls 70 percent of the money local school districts get.

Two other major institutions that have contol over education are the S.C. Legislature and the State Board of Education, he said.

Along with controlling the purse strings, though, the State Department of Education offers help and support for any district that asks, said Margaret Harper, a former Rock Hill teacher and a member of the Rawlinson Road Junior High School advisory council.

"But it seems the districts that need help the most don't ask for it," she said.

Mrs. Harper, wife of Rock Hill school board member Don Harper, also outlined how people can get active:

— Identify people who share the same concerns about education.

— Identify the most pressing problem.

— Outline strategy to tackle the problem.

— Talk with school officials and school board members.

— Be persistent and ask board to form a committee to look at solutions to the problems.

After action is taken on the problem, she said, monitor the results and see that progress is made.

School districts need to have the right to develop the specifics of how educational programs will be executed, said Dr. William Daniel, chairman of the religion and philosophy department at Winthrop College.

The State Department of Education is responsible for the "broad picture of education" and local school districts are responsible for the details, he said. Local school districts must be held accountable, he said.

Rock Hill- Appendix III
Evening Herald
January 29, 1981
Page- 8

Sumter- Appendix IV

Sumter Daily Item
March 11, 1981
Page- 3A

Citizens' Opinions Important, State Education Official Says

Citizens do have a very important role in education at the state level, according to Dill Gamble of the state Department of Education.

Gamble, who is associate superintendent for program improvement with the department of education, was one of several participants last night at a public forum sponsored by the Southeastern Public Education Program of the American Friends Service Committee. Approximately 30 persons attended the forum held at the City-County Office Building.

Other panelists were Dr. Seldon Smith, professor of history and political science at Columbia College; Margie Williams, a member of Oakland Elementary School Parent, Teachers Association and Sylvia Loney of Sumter.

Both Gamble and the other panel members encouraged parents to become involved in the educational process and to make their input felt. Gamble pointed out that when Charlie Williams became State Superintendent of Education, he held "listening sessions" for that purpose. Starting next week, the State Board will sponsor more sessions of this kind around the state.

Ms. Loney and Ms. Williams suggested to those attending that the State Board is available to assist schools with problems such as discipline, using tests, desegregation problems, improving instructional programs and improving the skills of local school boards. They said parents should take the initiative in seeking help.

Lorene Bradley, project coordinator, suggested one way parents can get information on help available is to talk to the State Board member representing their area.

— MARIAN MARSH

Hartsville- Appendix V

Hartsville Messenger
March 30, 1981
Pages- 4, 1A

Hartsville Meeting Discusses State And Local School Responsibility

(Hartsville, S.C.)

By NANCY TRUESDALE
Messenger Correspondent

It was billed as a public forum on education sponsored by the Southeastern Public Education Program (SEPEP) of the American Friends Service Committee. Few attended the gathering last Tuesday night at the Center Theater meeting room, but those who did appeared deeply interested in specific areas of public education.

The stated purpose of the forum was to discuss the role the state should play in South Carolina schools on the local level and how much input local citizens and school officials should have in education decisions made at the state level.

T. C. Kistler of Darlington, a member of the State Board of Education, said board members are interested in what citizens think. He called the 17 member state board "a lay board sandwiched between professionals (State Department of Education) and politicians (the legislature)." He said the avenues of communication with the state level for private citizens are hard to find, but they are there. He suggested the best start would be a call to a county school board member.

Kistler cited two cases in other states in which parents had, by demanding equal education for their children, put in motion sweeping changes in public education in their own states. A family in California and one in Texas, in separate legal actions, sued their states on the basis that their children attended school in poor school districts with schools inferior to those in more affluent districts. In both cases, the judicial decision was that the state is responsible to provide an equal education for all public school children.

Other states, including South Carolina, took their cue from these decisions and began, in Kistler's words, "to intrude more and more into setting the pattern of at least certain standards that should exist in each school district." On the other hand, Kistler said State Superintendent Charlie Williams continually reminds

(See Meeting, page 4A)

Meeting

(Cont'd. from page 1A)

the state board that local control of education is essential. "As much latitude as possible," Kistler said, "has been delegated to the citizens at the local level." One example is the election of county school board members.

Second on the panel of three was Freddie Williams of Darlington. Williams said many citizens feel that the state should step into eliminate what he calls the "dual School system" in Darlington County. "We still have separate and unequal schools in our district," he said, challenging a comparison between Hartsville and St. John's High Schools on the one hand and Mayo and Butler on the other. He said the predominantly black and white schools are not comparable in the areas of facilities, curriculum instruction and finance.

"I believe if the state board had the guts and sensitivity," Williams said, "for the improvement of quality education for South Carolina's children, they would adopt the policy to take the leadership to eliminate any school in Darlington County identified as a black or white school."

Williams said many feel the state should monitor and seek parental input in the testing of children in public schools. He charged that tests are often used to track black children into classes for mentally handicapped. He also indicated that many citizens are concerned about the decline of black teachers in the school system. He said that, since 1970, the county has lost about 16 per cent of its black teachers. He called for the elimination of the National Teachers Exam, which he called a barrier to the employment of black teachers.

Williams also called for a better way to select state board members. He indicated that their present all white membership averages 53 years in age.

Third on the panel was Dr. Flora Hopkins of the Education Department of Coker College. The Darlington County School Board members said that, under the Basic Skills Assessment Act, individual school districts needing help from the state will get it whether they want it or not. She said the state monitors programs in individual districts through reports prepared by schools concerning numbers of students in various categories, test results and specific educational programs.

During the question and answer period that followed the presentation, Franklin Hines expressed concern for the parent who sees a problem in his child's school but feels inadequate to express that problem to the appropriate official. Kistler encouraged such parents to communicate through groups like the Darlington County Task force and their vote.

When Hines added his concern for the continuing dual school system here, Dr. Hopkins said it may come down to a matter of finance in that it is expensive to keep so many small schools running. She added, however, that closing schools i an emotional issue.

Williams said one positive aspect of the "system of oneness" he seeks would be that the whites would make sure the education was good where their children went to school.

Appendix V

The Role the State Board of Education Should Play
In Improving the Quality of Education
(by Freddie Williams)

The State Board shall determine and adopt policy, monitor its implementation and evaluate the results such policy has accomplished. The State Board also has a responsibility for providing leadership in the general improvement of education by sensing the educational needs of the state and advocating adoption of policies instrumental to meeting these needs.

May citizens in Darlington County would like to see the State Board of Education take leadership in the following areas:

1. The State Board of Education should provide leadership in the elimination of the dual school system in Darlington County. It has been 27 years since the landmark school case, Brown versus the Board of Education, and we still have separate and unequal schools in our district. I charge that there is no comparison between Butler High School and Mayo High School or Mayo High School and St. John High in terms of physical plant, curriculum, instructions or finance. I believe that if the State Board of Education had the guts and sensitivity for the improvement of quality education for all of South Carolina's children, they would adopt a policy and take the leadership to eliminate any school in Darlington County identified as a black or white school. Mr. Kistler is a businessman and I think he will agree that Darlington, Hartsville, Lamar or Society Hill areas are too small to support two high schools or two junior high schools.

2. The citizens believe that the board of education should monitor the policy of testing and evaluation in the public schools. So often tests results are misinterpreted and misused. Tests can so often be used to justify and encourage funding for the district, tracking and filling up the EMR classes with black students. We would like to see the State Board of Education implement policies that would assure parent input in the selection and use of testing with an educational program or organize committees in each school district to evaluate test and evaluation.

3. Many Darlington County citizens are concerned about the decline of black teachers in the school system. Since 1970, we have lost about 16% of our black teachers and dropped from 43% in 1970 to 27% in 1980. The absence of black teachers in our system is robbing our children of role models in the profession, exposure to our rich history and culture and many dedicated workers. We further feel that we should hire teachers and administrators, both black and white, who believe

in public education; all children have the ability to learn and have knowledge of the struggle of minority groups. The board of education should develop a policy to maintain, retain and recruit black teachers and administrators and eliminate barriers that keep them out of the system such as the National Teacher Examination, etc. This seems like it is impossible for the State Board of Education to be sensitive to the needs of poor, black and disadvantaged youths. Our State Board of Education is 88% white, and 100% professionally employed. It's amazing that 60% of the board are former educators or school officials and only a small minority have children attending public schools. The average age of the board is 53 years old.

The Role the State Department of Education Should Play In the Improvement of the Quality of Education

Many citizens feel that there are several areas the State Department of Education can assist local school districts to improve the quality of education.

1. There is a problem in the school with discipline. Many children receive suspension and expulsion during the school year. Black children that are over active or hard to discipline are thrown into MR or EMR classes. The State Department can expose the schools to newly created disciplinary action and administer a training program for all schools whether they are called in to help or not. We need to take preventive measures rather than reacting to discipline problems.

2. The State Department of Education should make it mandatory for all teachers to take a course in minority history so that teachers would be prepared to deal with problems of minorities as it relates to culture, history or language. Communication can remove many racial and economic barriers.

3. Many school board members are elected each year without having concrete knowledge of what the big picture of education is all about. The State Department of Education should have a course for board members so that they can meet the great responsibilities they were elected for.

Parent and community participation should be encouraged by the State Department of Education. School PTA's and other interested citizen groups in education should be an integral part of the schools. They should not only be used as a tool for monitoring and evaluation, but a tool for support and cooperation.

OPINIONNAIRE

	Bishopville	Sumter	Rock Hill	Clemson	Marion	Charleston	Hartsville
1. The State Department and the State Board of Education develop standards to assure certain levels of performance among school districts (administrators, students and teachers). Please check one item in each group which you believe to be true of those standards which have been developed by these people.							
I believe the standards are:							
A. Making a great deal of improvement in the quality of education at the local level	39%	33%	29%	-	75%	46%	55%
Making little improvement in the quality of education at the local level	47%	56%	71%	89%	25%	46%	45%
Contributing to a decline in the quality of education at the local level	14%	11%	-	11%	-	8%	-
B. Necessary	36%	20%	70%	56%	67%	17%	82%
Necessary for some districts	22%	40%	13%	22%	25%	25%	18%
Necessary but rules and regulations are too strict	18%	20%	13%	-	8%	8%	-
Placing too much burden on school administrators (superintendents, etc.)	24%	20%	4%	22%	-	50%	-
2. Below is a list of items about the authority of the State Board of Education. Place a check mark in front of the statement you believe to be true of the board.							
I believe the State Board of Education:							
Is using its authority to provide good public schools in South Carolina	8%	-	4%	-	-	8%	27%
Is not using its authority to provide good public schools in South Carolina	37%	50%	30%	40%	17%	15%	18%

	Bishopville	Sumter	Rock Hill	Clemson	Marion	Charleston	Hartsville
Is doing the best it can considering its authority and the resources provided by the General Assembly for public schools in South Carolina	29%	50%	44%	30%	83%	54%	18%
Is limited by its size and the methods of operation (i.e., the board often automatically approves recommended policies)	26%	-	22%	30%	-	23%	37%
3. According to recent research there is a lack of communication between the state education system and local citizens. Below is a list of methods which the State Board of Education can use to improve its communication with local citizens. Place a check mark by the item you believe to be the best method of communication.							
The State Board of Education can best improve its communications with local citizens by:							
Holding a public meeting throughout the state	27%	9%	17%	23%	35%	14%	22%
Inviting representatives of local school advisory councils to attend State Board of Education meetings	15%	-	14%	12%	10%	14%	7%
Establishing a "hot line" to facilitate communication with local citizens	8%	27%	12%	-	20%	-	14%
Conducting a state-wide survey of citizens' attitudes toward public education in South Carolina every three years	3%	18%	14%	6%	5%	9%	-
Establishing a Citizen's Advisory Council to the State Board of Education	11%	18%	14%	6%	15%	23%	14%
Requiring each member of the State Board of Education to visit schools and talk with parents, students and administrators in each school he/she represents	34%	27%	26%	53%	15%	36%	43%
Other	2%	-	3%	-	-	4%	-

*The percentage for each item is based on the number of responses for each statement.